

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the due consideration given the application.

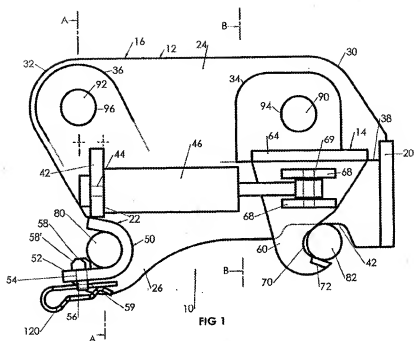
Claims 24-32 are pending in the application. Claims 1-23 have been canceled. Claims 24-32 are newly presented and find support in the original disclosure and drawing figures.

No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this amendment.

Rejection Under 35 USC §102(b) / §103(a)

Claims 1-11, 14-18 and 23 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by BARDEN (U.S. Patent 6,058,633). Claims 20-22 have been rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over BARDEN in view of ESSEX et al. (U.S. Patent 4,881,867). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention pertains to an apparatus for connecting an implement to a prime mover. The present invention includes technology that can retain a connecting pin in a recess in the event of removal or failure of a retainer. The present invention is illustrated, by way of example, in Figure 1 of the application, which is reproduced below.



Independent claim 24 of the present invention corresponds to cancelled claim 1 and further defines the present invention in relation to the shape and location of the passage (54) through which the retaining pin (56) is inserted.

The other independent claim is claim 30, which sets forth the relation of the retractable pin (60), which is described with reference to Figure 6, which is reproduced below.

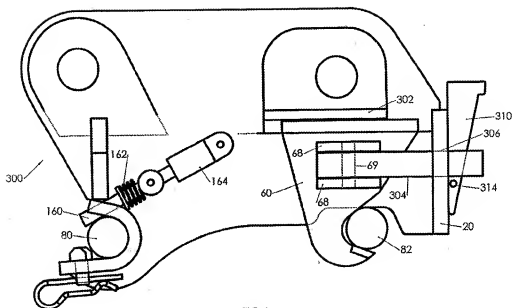


FIG 6

One important aspect of independent claim 24 is the location of the passage (54). The passage is defined as *"being located such that when the retaining pin is received with its head portion adjacent the connecting pin, the head portion of the retaining pin prevents the connecting pin from exiting the at least one recess"*. The present invention includes the provision of a passage which allows a secondary manually installed locking device to be used to provide improved safety, i.e., to prevent the implement dropping from the connector in the event of an inadvertent release, or a hydraulic failure or other failure, of the primary *"retaining means"*.

This secondary locking system is considered to be highly reliable and therefore safe due to its simplicity and rugged design. The secondary locking system uses a pin with a head, and which can be installed in such a manner that it becomes

locked in place, or "*wedged in*", when it is under load or in use. Engagement of the secondary locking system can also be verified visually by the operator.

Base claim 24 defines the invention in relation to the location of the passage which is used to hold the retaining pin. The passage is located far enough out of the recess to allow the retaining pin to be installed with its head inside the recess when the connector pin is situated within the recess, but far enough into the recess that the head of the retaining pin can block the connector pin's exit from the recess.

Claims 25, 26 and 27 relate to a specific feature of the retaining pin which allows the passage to be located even closer to the connector pin, while still being able to install the retaining pin with its head adjacent the retaining pin. Having the head of the retaining pin adjacent the connector pin is a significant advantage. This is because the connector pin cannot push the retaining pin out of the connector when the retaining pin is under load. And, in the case where the retaining pin has an offset head, the retaining pin can be rotated to minimize the clearance between the retaining pin and the connector pin to allow both to be retained as positively as possible.

Base claim 30 is directed at the configuration of the retractable pin (160) which is described with reference to Figure 6 (see above). This retractable pin is aligned such that the

connector pin can push it back toward a retracted position as it enters the recess but it is not able to do the same once it is within the recess.

While care has been taken to make sure that the language used in the claims is based on the description, some of the features or aspects of the claims have basis only in the drawings. It is considered that the drawings adequately show these features or aspects, however. Specifically, in claim 25, the word "offset" is used as an alternative to the term "cutaway". While the term offset is not used in the description, the side elevation view of the retaining pin (56) in Figure 1 clearly shows an offset head. The same figure also shows that the passage (54) is positioned such that the retaining pin (56) can be installed from within the recess while the connector pin (80) is within the recess.

BARDEN pertains to a quick coupling device and method utilizing an over-center spring. The Official Action refers to Figures 1-5 of BARDEN. Figure 2 of BARDEN, for example, is reproduced below.

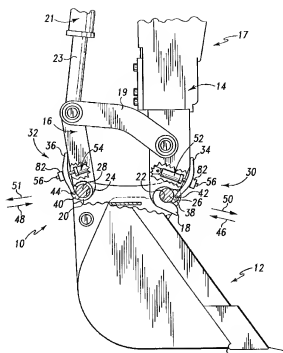


Fig. 2

The Official Action also refers to Figure 3 of ESSEX et al., reproduced below, for teachings pertaining to a connector.

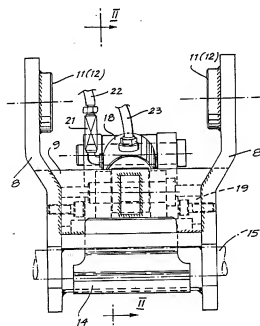


FIG. 3

However, the instant claims of the present invention are clearly different from BARDEN and ESSEX et al, and the previously cited prior art, in that none of them describes the use of a secondary retaining pin which is:

- configured such that it be fitted inside the recess and which can not be removed when under load, i.e., when the connector pin is bearing on it (claim 24). In fact, under load it becomes increasingly wedged in place, as opposed to the secondary locking system of BARDEN which can move out of the way when under load.

or

- adapted to move out of the way as the connector pin enters the recess but which will not be pushed by the connector to move out of the way when the connector pin moves to exit the recess (claim 30).

BARDEN thus does not anticipate a claimed embodiment of the present invention. One of ordinary skill and creativity would fail to produce a claimed embodiment of the present invention from a knowledge of BARDEN and ESSEX et al., and a *prima facie* case of unpatentability has thus not been made.

These rejections are believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Prior art cited but not utilized is believed to be non-pertinent to the instant claims.

The rejections are believed to have been overcome, obviated or rendered moot, and no issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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